

# Children, Youth & Family Consortium

## CYFC Monthly

### CYFC Monthly — January 2016

#### Focus Group Report on Collaboration Across Child Welfare and Education Systems Released

By Sara Langworthy, Ph.D., Extension Educator — CYFC

*Relationship-building amongst the professionals is so important...when everyone is joined for a common goal for this child to be able to function at their ultimate level. And we all have different perspectives, and we all have different roles, but how can we all work together to make that happen?*

– Focus Group Participant

Last year, I received the incredible opportunity to have in-depth conversations with social service and education professionals across the state of Minnesota to learn from them about the challenges and successes they face in working within and across child welfare and education systems. We in the field of children's mental health know that child welfare and education systems are complexly interrelated, but traditionally very isolated systems. We also know that limited collaboration across sectors can lead to overtaxing front-line social service and education professionals working with children and families.

But we wanted to dig deeper and learn more about what front-line social service and education professionals are experiencing day to day.

So we asked professionals what works and what doesn't when they're striving to meet the needs of children and families. In a series of eight focus group conversations with over 50 professionals across the state, we learned about their struggles, as well as their creative solutions to the challenges they face in providing the highest quality services for children and families.

We asked professionals across child welfare and education sectors to share their ideas for enabling effective collaboration and their practical suggestions for new professionals working with children and families. We also asked people to think creatively and redesign the ways child welfare and education systems operate to more effectively meet the needs of the children and families they work with daily.

These conversations were varied in topics and focus, but several key themes emerged. You can view a brief two-page [infographic](#) of the main findings or read the [full report](#) of these conversations.

I want to extend my sincere thanks to the many professionals who gave willingly of their time to share their practical wisdom, their how-to tips for new professionals, and their creative ideas for enhancing collaboration and the effectiveness of child welfare and education systems. Thank you for all you do every day for children and families!

*That's what I tell my clients when they say something nice about the professional. I say, 'You know that piece of paper that I hang on the wall didn't teach me to be a good human. That was what I learned in my childhood and growing up, and I'm still learning.' And that's where the magic happens. It's not about how*

*educated you are, it's about how compassionate, how empathetic, and how patient and supportive you can be.*

– Focus Group Participant

## Consortium News

### **New CYFC Web Resources Focus on Children's Mental Health as a Public Health Issue**

The CYFC website features new resources for professionals. Check out a video entitled "[Mental Health: Yours, Mine and Ours](#)" to learn about public health approaches that can improve mental health for all children, not just those diagnosed with mental illness. The video also outlines a model for understanding optimal mental health for everyone. You can also find questions for starting conversations about public health approaches to mental health with professionals and community members, and read research articles and national reports and guidelines for this growing area of work on the [CYFC website](#).

### **CYFC's Cari Michaels Featured in Rapid City Journal Article on Historical Trauma**

Extension Educator [Cari Michaels, M.P.H.](#) describes the nature of historical trauma and how it continues to affect lives today in a Jan. 3 article in the Rapid City (S.D.) Journal about Freedom Lodge, a new non-profit organization in Rapid City. Freedom Lodge will provide free youth suicide-prevention services and historical-trauma counseling sessions to all enrolled members of the nine tribes of South Dakota. Read the article, "[New nonprofit focuses on recovery from historical trauma](#)."

## Center for Family Development Announcements

### **Workshop to Highlight Attachment and Family Engagement**

Sponsor: Wilder Foundation

Date: January 29

Cost: \$65-130

Credits: 3-5.5 continuing education units

Location: St. Paul, MN

This half-day workshop, called "Trauma-Informed Practice is Attachment Savvy: Focus on Family Engagement," is the second of a three-part series on attachment and trauma training sponsored by the Wilder Foundation of St. Paul. The workshop, scheduled from 8:30 a.m. to noon, will give participants a framework and step-by-step demonstration of how to engage and collectively work with children, teens, and their families who have experienced complex trauma and do not extend trust easily. Learn more at the [Wilder Foundation website](#).

### **Presentation to Focus on the Impact of Medical Intervention on Very Young Children**

Sponsor: Minnesota Thrive Initiative

Date: February 12

Cost: Free

Location: Sauk Rapids, MN

Join Carol F. Siegel, Ph.D., to learn how the field of childhood traumatic stress has changed over the past 40 years. Hear how medical intervention can impact a child and how significant adults can buffer some of the adverse effects of traumatic stress. Contact Jane Ellison at [jane.ellison@isd47.org](mailto:jane.ellison@isd47.org) or 320-258-1103 for more information and to RSVP.

**Call for Proposals for Upcoming Conference on Trauma-Informed Care**

Sponsor: Association for Training on Trauma & Attachment in Children (ATTACH)

Due Date: January 29

ATTACH is looking for presentation proposals from child mental health professionals for its annual conference scheduled for September 22 to September 25 in St. Louis, MO. Presentations should focus on healing the mind, body, and spirit of children through evidence-based protocols, as well as on effective models now in use in the field. Help other professionals enhance their skills and abilities by sharing your experiences in the field. Find a list of special topics and more information on the ATTACH [website](#).

**One-Day Training to Share Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience**

Sponsor: Minnesota Peacebuilding Leadership Institute

Date: January 30

Cost: \$55-155

Credits: 6.5 hours of continuing education for nurses, teachers, and mental healthcare professionals and 5.5 hours of continuing legal education for attorneys

Location: Minneapolis, MN

This single-day training is designed for participants to learn trauma-informed and resilience-oriented basics in a shorter time frame than the standard STAR (Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience training). This "STAR-lite" training integrates research findings and best practices in neuropsychology, trauma healing and resilience, restorative justice, nonviolent conflict transformation, and broadly defined spirituality. Learn more and register on the [Minnesota Peacebuilding Leadership Institute website](#).

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